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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/236,939 01/25/99 GODOWSKI

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EXAMINER

HM12/0627

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ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1646

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/236,939

Applicant(s)

Baker et al.

Examiner

John Ulm

Group Art Unit

1646



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on May 1, 2000

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

☒ Claim(s) 31-44 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 31-44 is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been
☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☐ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---

Art Unit: 1646

1) Claims 31 to 44 are pending in the instant application. Claims 26 to 30 have been canceled and claims 31 to 44 have been added as requested by Applicant in Paper Number 8, filed 01 May of 2000.

2) Any objection or rejection of record which is not expressly repeated in this action has been overcome by Applicant's response and withdrawn.

3) The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

4) In view of the papers filed 11 May of 2000, the inventorship in this nonprovisional application has been changed by the deletion of Paul J. Godowski and Melanie R. Mark.

The application will be forwarded to the Office of Initial Patent Examination (OIPE) for issuance of a corrected filing receipt, and correction of the file jacket and PTO PALM data to reflect the inventorship as corrected.

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

5) Claims 31 to 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because they are drawn to an invention with no apparent or disclosed specific and substantial credible utility. The instant application has provided a description of an isolated DNA encoding a protein and the protein encoded thereby. The instant application does not disclose the biological role of this protein or its significance.

Art Unit: 1646

It is clear from the instant specification that the receptor protein described therein is what is termed an "orphan receptor" in the art. This is a protein whose cDNA has been isolated because of its similarity to known proteins. There is little doubt that, after complete characterization, this protein may be found to have a specific and substantial credible utility. This further characterization, however, is part of the act of invention and until it has been undertaken Applicant's claimed invention is incomplete. The instant situation is directly analogous to that which was addressed in *Brenner v. Manson*, 148 U.S.P.Q. 689 (Sus. Ct, 1966), in which a novel compound which was structurally analogous to other compounds which were known to possess anti-cancer activity was alleged to be potentially useful as an anti-tumor agent in the absence of evidence supporting this utility. The court expressed the opinion that all chemical compounds are "useful" to the chemical arts when this term is given its broadest interpretation. However, the court held that this broad interpretation was not the intended definition of "useful" as it appears in 35 U.S.C. § 101, which requires that an invention must have either an immediately obvious or fully disclosed "real world" utility. The court held that:

"The basic quid pro quo contemplated by the Constitution and the Congress for granting a patent monopoly is the benefit derived by the public from an invention with substantial utility", "[u]nless and until a process is refined and developed to this point-where specific benefit exists in currently available form-there is insufficient justification for permitting an applicant to engross what may prove to be a broad field", and "a patent is not a hunting license", "[i]t is not a reward for the search, but compensation for its successful conclusion."

The instant claims are drawn to an isolated nucleic acid encoding a protein of as yet undetermined function or biological significance, as indicated by the text in lines 16 to 19 on page 7 of the instant specification. There is absolutely no evidence of record or any line of reasoning that

Art Unit: 1646

would support a conclusion the a protein of the instant invention is associated in any way with the plurality of causally unrelated disorders that are listed on page 63 of the instant specification.

Until some actual and specific significance can be attributed to the protein identified in the specification as "HPTK6", or the gene encoding it, the instant invention is incomplete. The protein encoded by a DNA of the instant invention is a compound known to be structurally analogous to proteins which are known in the art as receptor tyrosine kinases. In the absence of a knowledge of the natural ligands or biological significance of this protein, there is no immediately obvious patentable use for it. To employ a protein of the instant invention in the identification of substances which inhibit or induce its activity is clearly to use it as the object of further research which has been determined by the courts to be a utility which, alone, does not support patentability. The employment of a protein of the instant invention, or a nucleic acid encoding that protein, as a tissue specific marker as suggested by the text on page 63 of the instant application is not a substantial or specific utility. All human proteins can invariably be classified into two categories, those which are expressed in a tissue or developmentally specific manner and those which are expressed ubiquitously. It can be alleged that any protein which is expressed in a tissue specific manner can be employed to detect the tissue in which it is expressed in a sample. Alternately, a human protein which is expressed ubiquitously can be employed to detect the presence of any human tissue in a sample. Such utilities are analogous to the assertion that a particular protein can be employed as a molecular weight marker, which is neither a specific or substantial utility. Since the instant specification does not disclose a credible "real world" use for

Art Unit: 1646

"HPTK6" then the claimed invention is incomplete and, therefore, does not meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being useful.

6) Claims 31 to 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to adequately teach how to use the instant invention for those reasons given above with regard to the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

7) Claims 31 to 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

7.1) Claims 31 to 40 are vague and indefinite in the recitation of the limitation "HPTK6 receptor protein tyrosine kinase". Because the instant specification does not identify that property or combination of properties which is unique to and, therefore, definitive of a "HPTK6 receptor protein tyrosine kinase" an artisan can not determine if a compound **which meets all of the other limitations of a claim** would then be included or excluded from the claimed subject matter by the presence of this limitation.

7.2) Claims 41 to 44 vague and indefinite because the limitation "stringent conditions" is conditional and the conditions under which this property is to be determined are not recited in the claim or the instant specification. The text in lines 7 to 18 on page 19 of the instant specification provides some conditions of hybridization but these conditions **are expressly identified there as exemplary, not limiting.**

Art Unit: 1646

7.3) Claims 41 and 43 are incorrect because there is no basis for a nucleic acid sequence in SEQ ID NO:4 or 8, which depict amino acid sequences.

8) Claims 31 to 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being clearly anticipated by the Johnson et al. publication (P.N.A.S. 90:5677-5681, Jun. 1993).

9) Claims 31 to 33, 35 to 38 and 40 to 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being clearly anticipated by the Di Mardo et al. publication (J. Biol. Chem. 268:24290-24295, 15 Nov. 1993).

10) The Declaration filed on 01 May of 2000 under 37 CFR 1.131 has been considered but is ineffective to overcome the Johnson et al. (P.N.A.S. 90:5677-5681, Jun. 1993) and Di Mardo et al. (J. Biol. Chem. 268:24290-24295, 15 Nov. 1993) references. The following is an excerpt from M.P.E.P. 2138.05:

"CLAIMED INVENTION IS NOT ACTUALLY REDUCED TO PRACTICE UNLESS THERE IS A KNOWN UTILITY

Utility for the invention must be known at the time of the reduction to practice. *Wiesner v. Weigert*, 212 USPQ 721, 726 (CCPA 1981) (except for plant and design inventions); *Azar v. Burns*, 188 USPQ 601, 604 (Bd. Pat. Inter. 1975) (a composition and a method cannot be actually reduced to practice unless the composition and the product produced by the method have a practical utility); *Ciric v. Flanigen*, 185 USPQ 103, 105 - 6 (CCPA 1975) ("when a count does not recite any particular utility, evidence establishing a substantial utility for any purpose is sufficient to prove a reduction to practice"; "the demonstrated similarity of ion exchange and adsorptive properties between the newly discovered zeolites and known crystalline zeolites ... have established utility for the zeolites of the count"); *Engelhardt v. Judd*, 151 USPQ 732, 735 (CCPA 1966) (When considering an actual reduction to practice as a bar to patentability for claims to compounds, it is sufficient to successfully demonstrate utility of the compounds in animals for somewhat different pharmaceutical purposes than those asserted in the specification for humans.); *Rey - Bellet v. Engelhardt*, 181 USPQ 453, 455 (CCPA 1974) (Two categories of tests on laboratory animals have been considered adequate to show utility and reduction to practice: first, tests carried out to prove utility in humans

Art Unit: 1646

where there is a satisfactory correlation between humans and animals, and second, tests carried out to prove utility for treating animals.).

A PROBABLE UTILITY MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH UTILITY

A probable utility does not establish a practical utility, which is established by actual testing or where the utility can be "foretold with certainty." *Bindra v. Kelly*, 206 USPQ 570, 575 (Bd. Pat. Inter. 1979) (Reduction to practice was not established for an intermediate useful in the preparation of a second intermediate with a known utility in the preparation of a pharmaceutical. The record established there was a high degree of probability of a successful preparation because one skilled in the art may have been motivated, in the sense of 35 U.S.C. 103, to prepare the second intermediate from the first intermediate. However, a strong probability of utility is not sufficient to establish practical utility.); *Wu v. Jucker*, 167 USPQ 467, 472 (Bd. Pat. Inter. 1968) (screening test where there was an indication of possible utility is insufficient to establish practical utility). But see *Nelson v. Bowler*, 206 USPQ 881, 885 (CCPA 1980) (Relevant evidence is judged as a whole for its persuasiveness in linking observed properties to suggested uses. Reasonable correlation between the two is sufficient for an actual reduction to practice.)."

The declaration fails to show that Applicant had established a practical utility for a receptor protein tyrosine kinase of the instant invention or an isolated nucleic acid encoding such a receptor prior to the publication of these references.


11) Applicant's arguments filed 01 May of 2000 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John D. Ulm whose telephone number is (703) 308-4008. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Kuntz can be reached at (703) 308-4623.

Official papers filed by fax should be directed to (703) 308-4242.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.


JOHN ULM
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 1800